

*Illustration of the Kanza Blue Earth village in 1819 from the sketchbook of Titian Ramsay Peale.
Courtesy of the Yale University Art Gallery.*

Visit to Blue Earth Village

by Lauren W. Ritterbush

After two weeks of grueling overland travel during the hot month of August, thirteen exhausted Americans espied their destination, the village of the Kanza Indian tribe near the Big Blue and Kansas Rivers.¹ Not knowing whether they would be received as friends or foes, they stopped to hoist a flag and prepare themselves by “arrang[ing] their dress, and inspect[ing] their firearms.” Once they were sighted, “the [Kanza] Women & Children went to the tops of their Houses with bits of Looking Glass and tin to reflect the light on the Party approaching.” In turn, a mob of “chiefs and warriors came rushing out on horseback, painted and decorated, and followed by great numbers on foot.” This was the point at which their fate among the Kanzas would be known. “The chief who was in advance, halted his horse when within a few paces of us; surveyed us sternly and attentively for some moments, and then offered his hand.” Only then could the Americans breathe a sigh of relief and accept the many greetings that followed. Despite the friendly welcome, the party of weary travelers undoubtedly felt overwhelmed as they were engulfed by a throng of Indians. Under the influence of prominent Kanza men, the crowd parted, allowing the visitors to enter the village and the home of a principal leader of the tribe. The mob followed filling it “completely and most densely,” leaving only a small area towards the back of the lodge for the guests to sit.² Thus began the 1819 stopover at Blue Earth village, home of the Kanza Indians.

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1. Many different spellings and pronunciations have been given for the name of the Kanza Indians in written records dating from the late seventeenth century to today. Modern references commonly include Kansa, Kaw, and Kanza. I have chosen the term most widely used by the Kanza people and their language (*Kaá'ze Íe*). “Kanza Language,” The Official Site Kaw Nation, http://kawnation.com/?page_id=76. A popular overview of Kanza history is William E. Unrau’s *The Kansa Indians: A History of the Wind People, 1673–1873* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1971). The most recent publication on the Kanza details their latest period of settlement in present-day Kansas: Ronald D. Parks, *The Darkest Period: The Kanza Indians and Their Last Homeland, 1846–1873* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2014).

2. Edwin James, *Account of an Expedition from Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains, Performed in the Years 1819, 1820, Volume 1* (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme and Brown, 1823), 110, online facsimile edition at <http://www.americanjourneys.org/aj-144a/index.asp>; Lillian B. Miller, ed., *The Selected*

The visiting travelers were part of a much larger, multifaceted government expedition begun in 1818. Its original mission was to establish a United States presence in the northern plains. Later that ambitious goal was abandoned, but not until two military units had ascended the lower Missouri River. The first halted at Isle au Vache or Cow Island between present-day Atchison and Leavenworth, Kansas, where they passed the fall, winter, and spring of 1818–1819, until their replacements arrived in August 1819. Traveling alongside this second contingent was a scientific party under the leadership of Major Stephen H. Long of the U.S. Army Corps of Topographical Engineers. The previous year Long had convinced Secretary of War John C. Calhoun of the utility of a scientific, exploratory mission up the Missouri in a steamboat specially designed for western travel. The steamship, the *Western Engineer*, would not only serve as transport but also impress American Indians with American technology and power. Long's party started its expedition in Pittsburgh in spring 1819 and by June was testing the vessel on the waters of the Missouri. It was in the context of their ascent up the Missouri that Long's scientists were sent on a side-trip to explore lands between the Kansas and Platte Rivers, including a visit to the Kanza village.³

The scientific party traveled overland from Fort Osage near modern Independence, Missouri, while Long continued up the lower Missouri, arranging to meet the explorers at the mouth of the Platte River south of present-day Omaha, Nebraska. Fort Osage was located roughly thirty miles downstream from the mouth of the Kansas River. It was attached to Osage Factory, a federal trading post established in 1808. The fort and factory were the westernmost government establishments along the Missouri River, other than the temporary military cantonment on Isle au Vache. The Long Expedition

stopped at Fort Osage briefly while the scientists were outfitted for their western trek. They were to visit the Kanzas on the Kansas River, then travel north towards the Platte. This plan changed after a hostile encounter with some Pawnees a short distance north of the Kanza settlement forced them to return to the Missouri. Although the scientists were unable to complete most of their explorations, they gained direct knowledge of the Kanzas at their village.

The exploratory team consisted of three scientists, an artist, a journalist and his servant, a topographical assistant, five soldiers, and an interpreter. Thomas Say was given command of the party, but his broader role with the Long Expedition was as a zoologist. He was a self-taught naturalist recognized as one of the founders of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia. Augustus E. Jessup, another member of the academy, accompanied the expedition as a geologist. Though a prominent businessman, he was also a trained and active mineralogist. The youngest of the scientists was nineteen-year-old Titian Ramsay Peale, who served as assistant naturalist. Peale was well known to Say, having previously illustrated Say's first volume of *American Entomology* and having accompanied him on an excursion to Georgia and Florida. He not only brought knowledge of animal and insect life and artistic talent, but also skills as a taxidermist and hunter. Many of these abilities he gained growing up the son of noted American artist and early museum curator Charles Willson Peale, who lobbied for his son's inclusion on Long's team. Samuel Seymour, a Philadelphia engraver and landscape artist, was formally assigned the task of producing visual images of the land and resident Indians. Few of his more than 125 sketches made over the course of the entire Long Expedition are extant. However, an engraving of his illustration of a dance inside a Kanza lodge was included in the final *Account of an Expedition* compiled by Dr. Edwin James after completion of the

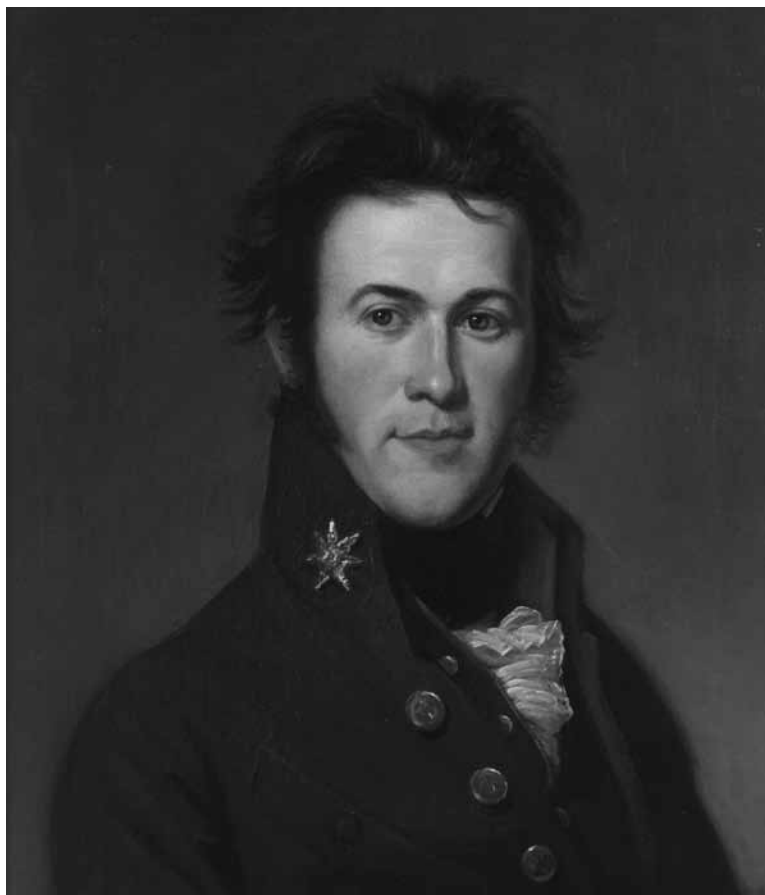
Papers of Charles Willson Peale and His Family; Volume 3, The Belfield Farm Years, 1810–1820 (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1991), 805; [Thomas Biddle] A Military Gentleman Attached to the Yellow Stone Expedition of 1819, "Notes on the Missouri River, and Some of the Native Tribes in Its Neighbourhood," *Analectic Magazine* 1, n.s., nos. 4 & 5 (1820): 303–4. The author of the latter account is simply listed as a "Military Gentleman attached to the Yellow Stone Expedition in 1819," but internal clues strongly suggest the author was Thomas Biddle, who served as expedition journalist until early September then transferred to the military unit stationed on the Missouri River.

3. The original goal of reaching the northern plains was abandoned in 1820. After exploring the lower Missouri River and visiting the Kanza village in 1819, the scientists over-wintered along the Missouri River in present-day Nebraska. During that time their orders changed.

Instead of continuing up the Missouri, they were sent westward to the Rocky Mountains and back, a trip they completed in 1820. William H. Goetzmann, *Army Exploration in the American West, 1803–1863*, Yale Publications in American Studies 4 (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1959); Cardinal Goodwin, "A Larger View of the Yellowstone Expedition, 1819–1820," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 4 (December 1917): 299–313; Roger L. Nichols and Patrick L. Halley, *Stephen Long and American Frontier Exploration* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1995); William E. Lass, *A History of Steamboating on the Upper Missouri River* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1962); William E. Lass, *Navigating the Missouri: Steamboating on Nature's Highway, 1819–1935* (Norman, Okla.: Arthur H. Clark, 2008); James, *Account of an Expedition from Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains*.

entire Long Expedition. Major Thomas Biddle, who was employed as journalist, accompanied the scientists along with a boy employed as his servant. Soon after they returned to the Missouri, Biddle left Long's service to join the loosely associated military unit. He published his observations from 1819, including ethnographic details about the Kanzas, in 1820 (while the rest of the expedition continued). Others on this journey were young Lieutenant William Swift, a recent West Point graduate appointed as a topographical assistant; five soldiers; and John Dougherty. Indian Agent Benjamin O'Fallon (who was on the Missouri River at the time) hired Dougherty to serve as an interpreter. He was later formally approved as a subagent to O'Fallon. Dougherty was the only individual who had prior experience in the region, but apparently he had not visited the Kanza village previously.⁴

The scientific party left Fort Osage on August 5, 1819, with three pack horses carrying provisions for ten days. Indian trails extended from Fort Osage, but a description of the men's march suggests that they often traveled without the benefit of a well-marked path. In the final account of the Long Expedition, compiler Edwin James related, "The high and coarse grasses, which now covered the plains, greatly impeded their progress, and very rapidly destroyed their clothing and mockasins [sic]." Exposure to the



Self-taught naturalist Thomas Say, a founder of the Academy of Natural Sciences, led the party of scientists to Blue Earth in August 1819. Charles Willson Peale painted portraits of Say, Titian Ramsay Peale, and three others on the Long Expedition before their departure from Philadelphia in March 1819. Courtesy of the Academy of Natural Sciences Archive Collection 2011-025.

4. Patricia Tyson Stroud, *Thomas Say: New World Naturalist* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992); Kenneth Haltman, "Titian Ramsay Peale's Specimen Portraiture; Or, Natural History as Family History," in *The Peale Family: Creation of a Legacy, 1770-1870*, ed. Lillian B. Miller (Washington D.C.: Abbeville Press in association with The Trust for Museum Exhibitions and the National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, 1996), 186-201; Kenneth Haltman, *Looking Close and Seeing Far: Samuel Seymour, Titian Ramsay Peale, and the Art of the Long Expedition, 1818-1823* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2008); John Francis McDermott, "Samuel Seymour: Pioneer Artist of the Plains and the Rockies," *Annual Report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, 1950* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1951): 497-509; Nichols and Halley, *Stephen Long and American Frontier Exploration*; Howard Ensign Evans, *The Natural History of the Long Expedition to the Rocky Mountains, 1819-1820* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997); [Biddle], "Notes on the Missouri River, and Some of the Native Tribes in Its Neighbourhood"; James, *Account of an Expedition from Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains*; George W. Cullum, *Biographical Register of the Officers and Graduates of the United States Military Academy at West Point, N.Y., from Its Establishment, in 1802*, 3rd ed. (West Point, N.Y.: Association of Graduates & The Alumni Foundation, 1891), 236-44, http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Gazetteer/Places/America/United_States/

sun, excessive heat, flies and other insects, combined with limited food, led to illness.⁵ At one point the team feared they were lost, eventually discerning a path along the Kansas River. On August 20, after wandering well

Army/USMA/Cullums_Register/; Mark William Kelly, *Lost Voices on the Missouri: John Dougherty and the Indian Frontier* (Leavenworth, Kans.: Sam Clark Publishing, 2013).

5. Members of the Long Expedition, especially Say, were sick at various times during their travels. The earliest reference to illness was noted by Peale on June 27, when Say was said to be unwell as they traveled through what is now central Missouri. Say continued to suffer during their August excursion to the Kanza village and beyond. Although no diagnosis is given, it appears that Say may have contracted malaria, a parasitic infection spread by certain mosquitoes. Peale noted several places along their route where mosquitoes were especially abundant and bothersome, including in late May and early June near the mouth of the Ohio and up the Mississippi River past Cape Girardeau (where Say and others suffered from a bout of "intermittent fevers" suggested



Nineteen-year-old Titian Ramsay Peale (II) previously had traveled with Thomas Say and illustrated Say's first volume of *American Entomology*. Peale's sketchbooks from the Long Expedition include the earliest known illustration of a plains earthlodge village, the Kanza village of Blue Earth. Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.

over 140 miles, the travelers were glad, albeit nervous, to see the Kanza village. Their concern was raised by a series of events along the Missouri River the previous November. During that month, several Kansas had been

to be malaria at the end of the Long Expedition). Interestingly, as an accomplished entomologist, Say identified and described two species of mosquitoes that have since been shown to be vectors of malaria (and another species responsible for spreading West Nile and encephalitic viruses). Miller, *The Selected Papers of Charles Willson Peale and His Family*, 739, 742, 750; James, *Account of an Expedition from Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains*, 109; Harry B. Weiss and Grace M. Ziegler, *Thomas Say, Early American Naturalist* (Springfield, Ill.: Charles C. Thomas, 1931), 69–79; Evans, *The Natural History of the Long Expedition to the Rocky Mountains, 1819–1820*, 215–16; Stroud, *Thomas Say: New World Naturalist*, 124, 279; Clark Kimberling, "Thomas Say (1787–1834): Father of American Entomology," <http://faculty.evansville.edu/ck6/bstud/say.html>.

severely punished for stealing from military hunters, firing on the Indian agent, and other offenses. The American visitors did not know whether the Kansas would retaliate for those reprimands.⁶

Animosity aside, Say and his men were treated as honored guests by the Kansas during their roughly four-day visit. Say tried to recover from illness but also managed to make observations of the Indians, their village, and the natural history of the region. He and Biddle left the most complete records of Kanza society and culture during this early historic period. Peale, no doubt, kept busy studying the natural world around the village and made his own observations of the Indians. Both Peale and Seymour did some sketching, providing the earliest known images of the Kansas and an earthlodge village. Information gained by these men was incorporated into the final report prepared by James and published in 1823, three years after Biddle had published his own observations in the April and May 1820 issues of *The Analectic Magazine*.⁷

The Kanza village they visited in 1819 is known today as Blue Earth. It was located on a terrace north of the Kansas River near the lower reach of the Big Blue River.⁸ According to notes by Bureau of American Ethnology linguist and ethnologist James Owen Dorsey, late nineteenth-century Kansas called the Blue River *Nitó*. The phrase *ígama" sábe*, meaning "black paint" also has been applied to the Blue River and Kanza village. The lower portion of the Blue was called *ma"yi"ka toho uje*, which translates as "lower Blue Earth."⁹ Both Say and Biddle used the

6. James, *Account of an Expedition from Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains*, 107–11; Roger L. Nichols, ed., *The Missouri Expedition, 1818–1820: The Journal of Surgeon John Gale, with Related Documents* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1969), 32–40.

7. James, *Account of an Expedition from Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains*; [Biddle], "Notes on the Missouri River, and Some of the Native Tribes in Its Neighbourhood."

8. The location of Blue Earth village, known to archaeologists as 14PO24, has experienced much erosion and development over the past 150 years. Although once located east of the modern city of Manhattan, Kansas, the area is now within a heavily developed portion of the Manhattan Urban Area. Lauren W. Ritterbush, *Manhattan Archaeological Survey, Phase I* (City of Manhattan, Kansas, 2009).

9. James Owen Dorsey, "Kansa Local (place) Names 1883?" Manuscript 4800: Dorsey Papers, Kansa (3.2.2) [252] (National Anthropological

term “Blue Earth” in reference to the stream that entered the Kansas River near the village. Likewise, Titian Peale must have used this name in reporting the events of their excursion in a letter home that autumn. Although this document does not survive, his father’s reply in late 1819 and early 1820 made reference to the party’s “situation near the blue earth river,” likely repeating the name used by the younger Peale in his correspondence.¹⁰

What the scientists found when they arrived at Blue Earth was a large settlement shared by the entire Kanza tribe. It was composed of 120 lodges, most of which, according to Biddle, were occupied by two families or about ten people, although there was a wide variety of family arrangements. Using these figures, the entire population was about 1,200 people. A general census of tribes in Missouri Territory two years earlier (1817) estimated that 1,800 Kanzas lived in a single earthlodge village along the Kansas River, undoubtedly the same settlement. Both population approximations are within the general range of 1,000 to 2,000 given by others during the eighteenth and first quarter of the nineteenth century. As early as 1702, a French official listed the Kanza population at 1,500. French trader and ambassador Étienne de Veniard, Sieur de Bourgmont ascended the Missouri in 1724 and visited the tribe in present northeastern Kansas.¹¹ He indicated a population of about 1,100 (300 men, 300 women, and 500 children). William Clark, who obtained indirect information about the Kanzas in 1804, reported a “probable Number of Souls” of 1,300. By that time they had moved from the Missouri to the Kansas River. In Zebulon Pike’s report of his travels across the plains in 1806, he estimated the Kanza population at 1,565 living in one village, as also reported by Clark.¹²

Archives, Smithsonian Institution, 1883), http://anthropology.si.edu/media/NMNH-NAA_MS_4800_252.pdf; Linda A. Cumberland and Robert L. Rankin, *Kaánze Íe Wayáje: An Annotated Dictionary of Kaw (Kanza)* (Kaw City, Okla.: Kanza Language Project of the Kaw Nation, 2012).

10. James, *Account of an Expedition from Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains*, 123; Miller, *The Selected Papers of Charles Willson Peale and His Family*, 789.

11. Today this is referred to as the Doniphan site, 14DP2, near the mouth of Independence Creek. Waldo R. Wedel, “The Kansa Indians,” *Transactions of the Kansas Academy of Science* 49 (June 1946): 1–35; Waldo R. Wedel, *An Introduction to Kansas Archeology*, Smithsonian Institution, Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 174 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1959), 98–130.

12. James, *Account of an Expedition from Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains*, 112; [Biddle], “Notes on the Missouri River, and Some of the Native Tribes in Its Neighbourhood,” 306; Anonymous, “Indian Census, Missouri Territory,” (The State Historical Society of Missouri, 1817), <http://shs.umsystem.edu/manuscripts/invent/1628.pdf>; A. P.

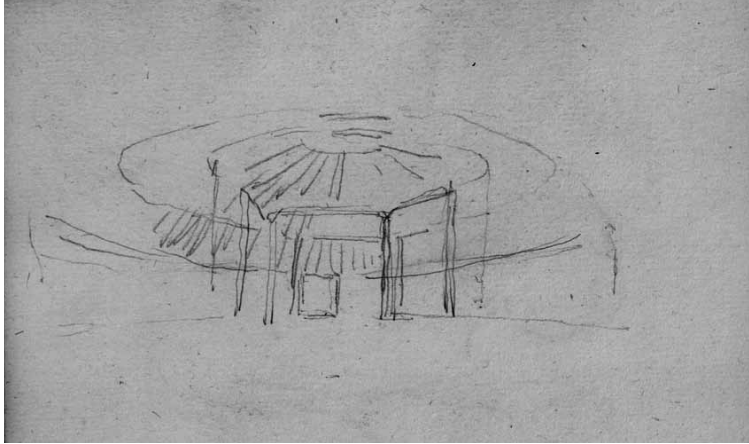
When the scientists spied the Kanza village on August 20, they saw for the first time a form of shelter unlike any they had previously encountered. These were not unique to the Kanzas, but a form of housing used by several village groups on the central and northern plains. Intrigued by what they saw, the American visitors described and sketched the earthlodges in some detail, providing the earliest images of Great Plains earthlodges. Say and Biddle explained that the plan of each lodge was circular, and “the general form of the exterior may be denominated hemispheric.” This is best shown in a drawing by Peale that presents an oblique bird’s-eye view of part of the Kanza village and its setting. Each of the six lodges portrayed is circular and “hemispheric” with the rectangular entrances of four facing into the village. Smoke issues from a central opening atop one lodge. Beyond the village lies an open expanse before a line of trees and the distant bluffs of the Flint Hills.¹³

The lodges were substantial structures. This was evident to the arriving Americans when they saw crowds of people on top of the houses, providing a scale for their size and sturdiness. Biddle recorded that they ranged 30–60 feet in diameter.¹⁴ Anyone encountering these lodges

Nasatir, ed., *Before Lewis and Clark: Documents Illustrating the History of the Missouri, 1785–1804*, vol. 1 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990), 8; Frank Norall, *Bourgmont: Explorer of the Missouri, 1698–1725* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1988); William Clark, “Fort Mandan Miscellany: Part 2: Estimate of the Eastern Indians,” in *The Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition*, ed. Gary E. Moulton, vol. 3, *Up the Missouri to Fort Mandan* (University of Nebraska Press / University of Nebraska-Lincoln Libraries-Electronic Text Center, 1987), http://lewisandclarkjournals.unl.edu/read/?_xslsrc=1804-1805.winter.part2.xml&_xslsrc=Lcstyles.xsl; Elliott Coues, ed., *The Expeditions of Zebulon Montgomery Pike* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Ross & Haines, 1965), 590–91; Unrau, *The Kansa Indians*, 25–26.

13. No doubt Dougherty had encountered earthlodges in his earlier far-ranging travels as a trader. The others had not; however, some may have read about those of the Arikaras, Mandans, and Hidatsas on the middle reach of the Missouri River in present-day South and North Dakota in travel accounts, such as those of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. Peale would have been familiar with that journey, because some of the items collected by Lewis and Clark were sent to his father’s museum in Philadelphia. Among the supplies Long provided for the scientists were various books that may have included descriptions of Great Plains earthlodges. They saw similar lodges among the Pawnees the following year. James, *Account of an Expedition from Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains*, 112; [Biddle], “Notes on the Missouri River, and Some of the Native Tribes in Its Neighbourhood,” 305; Titian Ramsay Peale, “Sketchbook from the Stephen H. Long Expedition to the Rocky Mountains,” 14b, 1819, Yale University Art Gallery, <http://artgallery.yale.edu/collections/objects/sketchbook-stephen-h-long-expedition-rocky-mountains>; Nichols and Halley, *Stephen Long and American Frontier Exploration*, 77.

14. James, *Account of an Expedition from Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains*, 110; [Biddle], “Notes on the Missouri River, and Some of the Native Tribes in Its Neighbourhood,” 303, 305–6.



This rough drawing of the framework of a Kanza earthlodge from Peale's expedition sketchbooks in 1819 offers insight into how the Kanzas designed the structure. Courtesy of the Yale University Art Gallery.

for the first time would be impressed by their ingenious construction and suitability to the hot, cold, and windy environment of the Great Plains. The internal framework consisted of posts, beams, and rafters overlain with mats, then earth. Say described the structure of the chief's lodge:

The roof is supported by two series of pillars, or rough vertical posts, forked at top for the reception of the transverse connecting pieces of each series; twelve of these pillars form the outer series, placed in a circle; and eight longer ones the inner series, also describing a circle; the outer wall, of rude framework, placed at a proper distance from the exterior series of pillars, is five or six feet high. Poles, as thick as the leg at base, rest with their butts upon the wall, extending on the cross-pieces, which are upheld by the pillars of the two series, and are of sufficient length to reach nearly to the summit. These poles are very numerous, and, agreeably to the position which we have indicated, they are placed all round in a radiating manner, and support the roof like rafters. Across these are laid long and slender sticks or twigs, attached parallel to each other by means of bark cord; these are covered by mats made of long grass, or reeds, or with the bark of trees; the whole is then covered completely over with earth, which, near the ground, is banked up to the eaves. A hole is permitted to remain in the middle of the roof to give exit to the smoke.¹⁵

15. James, *Account of an Expedition from Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains*, 110, 112–13. Biddle's description adds complementary

Titian Peale's father provided a secondhand description of Kanza lodges to one of his daughters in a letter dated February 22, 1820. His portrayal was based on an image (now lost) prepared by Seymour and perhaps a written description by his son: "Their Houses are a sort of frame work within, and covered with dirt on the outside, with a hole on the uppermost part for smoke to pass out, a door & a covered way to enter level with the ground." He noted features inside the lodge based on another drawing by Seymour (also lost), remarking on a "sunken circle to make thier [sic] fire" at the center of the floor below the smoke hole. The entrances as shown in Titian Peale's sketch of the village were further described by Biddle as "protected by a projection through which you stoop to pass."¹⁶

As indicated, Seymour and Peale prepared images of both the exterior and interior of the Kanza lodges. A rough sketch of the structural supports of the lodge in one of Peale's expedition sketchbooks provides visual clues to the lodge construction described by Say and Biddle.¹⁷ At least two depictions of the lodge interior were prepared by Seymour with one surviving as an etching in the final account of the Long Expedition. This shows the inside of the large lodge where the scientists stayed. The arrangement of interior posts is visible along with the raised platforms that lined most of the walls. These wooden stages served as shelves, seating, or beds covered with bison hides. Woven reed and bark mats formed walls when privacy was desired and carpet over parts of the floor.¹⁸

One of Seymour's interior views as well as a drawing of the village have been lost, but Peale's father, Charles Willson Peale, noted their existence. The senior Peale

information: "the village itself is a confused assemblage of lodges covered with dirt; their figures are circular, and their diameter from thirty to sixty feet; piles are driven into the ground in the form of a circle, which are elevated four or five feet from the earth, on these rest rafters which meet in the centre at an elevation of six or seven degrees, forming for the roof a conical figure with an aperture in the centre, to permit the smoke to escape. The lodge is covered with earth and mats on the roof and sides, and forms a comfortable habitation." [Biddle], "Notes on the Missouri River, and Some of the Native Tribes in Its Neighbourhood," 305.

16. Miller, *The Selected Papers of Charles Willson Peale and His Family*, 805, 806; [Biddle] "Notes on the Missouri River, and Some of the Native Tribes in Its Neighbourhood," 305.

17. Peale, "Sketchbook from the Stephen H. Long Expedition to the Rocky Mountains," 14a.

18. James, *Account of an Expedition from Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains*, 112–13, 126a; [Biddle] "Notes on the Missouri River, and Some of the Native Tribes in Its Neighbourhood," 305–6.

started the Philadelphia Museum, among the first in the United States, in the late eighteenth century. In early 1819, he arranged for his institution to serve as the repository for natural history objects collected as part of the Long Expedition.¹⁹ The museum's first items likely arrived in December 1819, when Long returned to Philadelphia while the other explorers wintered near Council Bluff, north of modern Omaha, Nebraska.²⁰ Among these were three illustrations by Seymour. Charles Peale described them as "A View of a Town of the Arcansa [Kanza] Indians, a view of the inside of one of the Houses, and a view of the falls of the Ohio, in the distance the Town of St. Louis [Louisville]."²¹

The senior Peale was fascinated by the first two images, both from Blue Earth, and mentioned them in letters to family members in early 1820. In return correspondence to Titian on February 21, 1820, he wrote:

I have made a Coppy [sic] in oil Colours of the arcansa [sic] Village in my last size choosen [sic] for Landscapes. It is a pleasing picture, the perspective excellent, and I have begun that Representing the interior of one of their habitations, the Indian Character is well drawn, and Mr. Semor [sic] does him credit by these sketches—²²

19. Charles Coleman Sellers, *Mr. Peale's Museum: Charles Willson Peale and the First Popular Museum of Natural Science and Art* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1980).

20. The Long Expedition crew constructed Engineer Cantonment on a low terrace along the west side of the Missouri River in the fall of 1819. Say, Seymour, Peale, and others spent the winter here, roughly five miles below the accompanying military unit (Cantonment Missouri). The site of this winter camp has been identified and investigated by archaeologists with the Nebraska State Historical Society. John R. Bozell, Robert E. Pepperl, and Gayle F. Carlson, eds., *Archeological Investigations at Engineer Cantonment: Winter Quarters of the 1819–1820 Long Expedition, Washington County, Nebraska*, Publications in Anthropology 12 (Lincoln: Nebraska State Historical Society, in press); Gayle F. Carlson, John R. Bozell, and Robert Pepperl, *The Search for Engineer Cantonment*, *Explore Nebraska Archeology* 8 (Lincoln: Nebraska State Historical Society, 2004), 1–28; John R. Bozell, "Discovering Engineer Cantonment, 1819–1820" (video lecture, Nebraska State Historical Society, Lincoln, June 17, 2004), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kUVW59iAaJw&feature=youtu_gdata_player.

21. Miller, *The Selected Papers of Charles Willson Peale and His Family*, 816; Charles Coleman Sellers, "Portraits and Miniatures by Charles Willson Peale," *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, n.s., 42, no. 1 (1952): 1–369; Charles Coleman Sellers, "Charles Willson Peale with Patron and Populace: A Supplement to 'Portraits and Miniatures by Charles Willson Peale' with a Survey of His Work in Other Genres," *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, n.s., 59, no. 3 (1969): 1–146.

22. Miller, *The Selected Papers of Charles Willson Peale and His Family*, 798.

Some idea of what was shown in the second of these illustrations can be gleaned from the description he penned to his daughter Angelica Peale Robinson the next day:

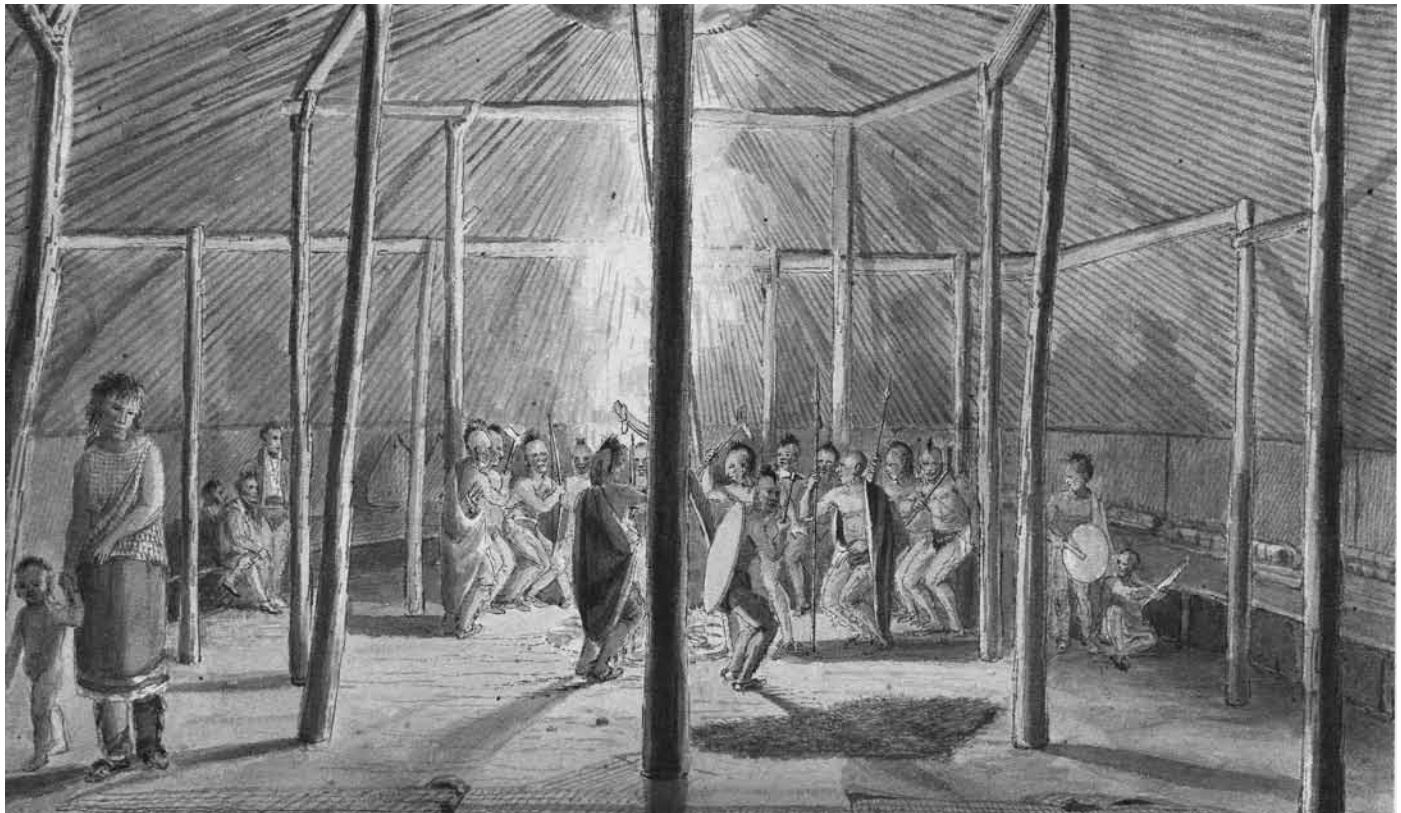
I have also on hand a view of the Interior of one of the buildings, with Indean [sic] Men, Women, & children, in faithful character, our Indian Agent smoking the Calmut [sic] & conversing with the chief. There is [sic] mats against some parts of the side walls & a sort of raised floor for some perhaps sick to lay on. others [sic] on Skins or Matts [sic] on the floor.²³

Archaeological evidence confirms the form of the lodges at Blue Earth. Circular depressions with raised edges were visible at the former location of this village half a century after it was abandoned. This was documented in 1880 when Manhattan attorney Henry W. Stackpole mapped the site at the request of Franklin G. Adams, secretary of the Kansas State Historical Society. He plotted more than 160 circular features, most of which were believed to be eroded remains of collapsed earthlodges.²⁴ The seemingly haphazard arrangement of these depressions matches reports that the village layout was "a confused assemblage of lodges" or lodges "placed as closely together as convenient, and destitute of any regularity of arrangement."²⁵

23. Ibid., 805–6; see also pp. 813, 816 for other references to the images by Seymour. Based on the description of this illustration, it does not appear to be the same sketch of the interior of a Kanza lodge included in the London edition of the final report of the expedition. There is no mention of dancing (as shown in the published image). Also, the existing image does not depict smoking a "calumet." The missing illustration likely portrayed the scientific party's first meeting with the Kanzas inside the chief's lodge where they smoked the "calumet" with leaders of the village. The reference to an Indian agent is likely in error and may refer to Say (the leader of the expedition), Dougherty (the interpreter and later an Indian agent), or even Biddle (a military officer).

24. Anonymous, "The Kansa Indians," *Kansas Historical Collections, 1875–1880* 1–2 (1881): 287; H. W. Stackpole, "Kansas Indian Village," 1880, *Kansas Memory*, Kansas Historical Society, <http://www.kansasmemory.org/item/224981>; John Tomasic, "The Rediscovery of Lost Maps of Manhattan's Blue Earth Kansa Indian Village," *Kansas Preservation* 33, no. 3 (2011): 19–21; John Tomasic, "The Rediscovery of the Blue Earth Site Maps: Reassessing the Status of 14PO24," *Current Archaeology in Kansas* 9 (2011): 20–25; Chapman Brothers, *Portrait and Biographical Album of Washington, Clay and Riley Counties* (Chicago: Chapman Brothers, 1890), web edition by Sheryl McClure (2003), <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~ksclay/1890bios/1890henstackpolebio.html>.

25. [Biddle], "Notes on the Missouri River, and Some of the Native Tribes in Its Neighbourhood," 305; James, *Account of an Expedition from Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains*, 112.



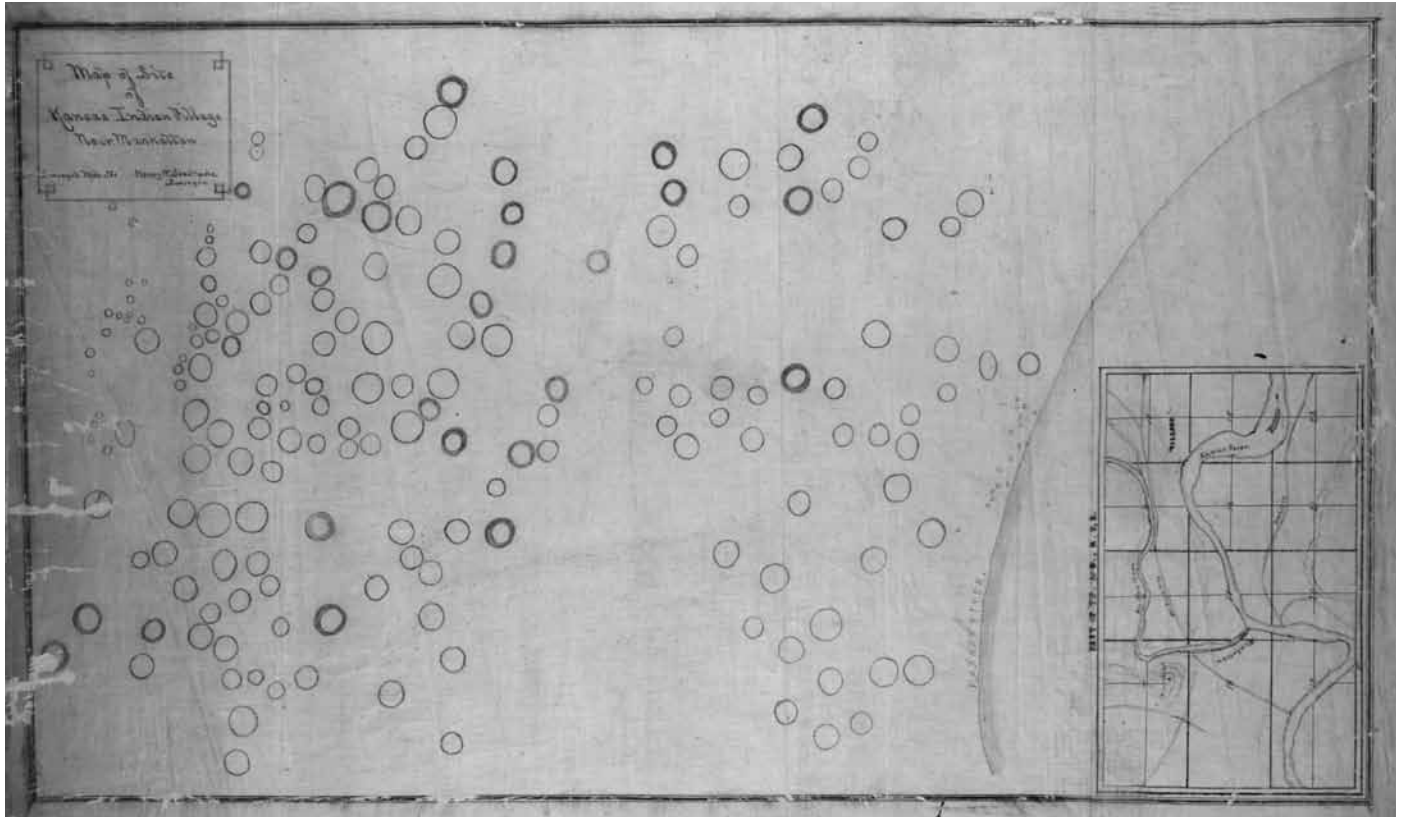
Samuel Seymour sketched this interior of a Kanza lodge at Blue Earth village in late August 1819, while Kanza warriors performed the Dog Dance. Note the post, beam and rafter framework; central hearth; floor mats in the foreground; a bison robe on the floor; and the Kanza warriors or dancers, musicians, woman, and child, with the American visitors in the background. Samuel Seymour, War Dance in the Interior of a Konza Lodge, from The Original Views: Drawn by the Artist S. Seymour during the Expedition from Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains under the Command of Major Stephen A. Long. Courtesy of the Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

Stackpole's map was used by (Kansas-born) Smithsonian Institution archaeologist Waldo R. Wedel to locate the site of Blue Earth village for archaeological study in 1937. By that time, not only had the Union Pacific Railroad cut across the former village, but the southern portion had eroded into the Kansas River. Parts of the old village site were farmed by Euroamerican settlers as early as 1856 and expanded over the next eighty-three years.²⁶ Cultivation and a tree nursery had by 1937 obliterated surface remnants of the once-thriving earthlodge village. Despite these disturbances, Wedel uncovered the floor of one circular lodge. This house was relatively small with a diameter of 28–29 feet and supported by four central support posts (rather than the eight shown in Seymour's extant illustration of the interior of the chief's lodge). The central posts were 10–12 inches in diameter and sunk to

a depth of 21–24 inches. They formed a square area in the center of the lodge measuring 8 by 9 feet around a central hearth. The hearth was an unlined basin about 30 inches in diameter packed with ash underneath which the earth was fire-reddened to a depth of 9 inches indicative of extensive use. Lying above the floor were pieces of fired clay impressed with grass from the roof. Evidence of an entryway extended 12 feet from the east side of the structure. Its inner conjunction with the interior space was marked by two posts along the interior portion of the entry. At its outer end Wedel found a 12-inch deep deposit of mixed sediments. This likely represented sweepings from the lodge, dung of valued horses tethered near the door at night, and disturbances that occurred outside the well-traveled lodge entrance.²⁷ Overall, the archaeological

26. United States General Land Office map and field notes for public land survey, T10S R8E (1856).

27. Anonymous, "The Kansa Indians"; Stackpole, "Kansas Indian Village"; Wedel, *An Introduction to Kansas Archeology*, 187–91; [Biddle], "Notes on the Missouri River, and Some of the Native Tribes in Its Neighbourhood," 310.



Manhattan attorney Henry W. Stackpole created this map of Blue Earth village for the Kansas State Historical Society in 1880, fifty years after its abandonment. The large circles represent depressions with raised edges left by collapsed earthlodges. The structures were laid out in an irregular arrangement, possibly to hinder potential attackers.

evidence fits well with that described by Say and Biddle 118 years earlier.

Village or lodge features not well-described by Say or Biddle were storage areas. Some possessions of the lodge inhabitants, such as the “medicine or mystic bags,” hung from the interior posts, mats, and rafters. Other items, such as saddles, skins, and food were stored on (or below) the platforms along the walls or elsewhere on the floor. The archaeological evidence shows that pits were also used for storage. In the northern portion of the village site, Wedel excavated two pits. The largest of these was 4 feet deep with an opening equally wide but with an expanded base 69 inches in diameter, giving the pit a distinctive bell-shaped or undercut profile. These would have been suitable for storing dried foodstuffs for several years (if kept clean and dry), although their final use appears to have been for trash disposal.²⁸

Pits of this size and form were not found in the floor of the excavated lodge, but a couple of other features were present. One was a smaller pit measuring 10–16 inches in diameter and 10 inches deep. It was located along the northwest wall and contained fragments of burned corn cobs and other organic materials (bark and grass). Interestingly, excavation of the two postholes immediately to the south and outlining the back or west part of the lodge uncovered similar materials.²⁹ It is unknown whether the area of the lodge opposite the entrance had a special function or significance to the Kanzas.

Two other floor or subfloor disturbances were uncovered in the excavated lodge. One was a second fireplace 8 feet north of the central hearth and a foot smaller in diameter. Perhaps this was used to warm those who slept on a bed along the adjacent (north) wall or served as the hearth of a second family. The other feature,

28. Wedel, *An Introduction to Kansas Archeology*, 191; James, *Account of an Expedition from Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains*, 113; [Biddle],

“Notes on the Missouri River, and Some of the Native Tribes in Its Neighbourhood,” 305.

29. Wedel, *An Introduction to Kansas Archeology*, 191.



Smithsonian archaeologist Waldo Wedel excavated the floor of one of the earthlodges at Blue Earth in 1937. His findings resembled the descriptions and drawings of the Long Expedition from over one hundred years earlier. Waldo R. Wedel, An Introduction to Kansas Archeology, Plate 16a. Courtesy of the Smithsonian Institution.

also located in this north-central sector, appears to pre-date the lodge. This was a broad pit measuring 7.5 by 4 feet (its depth was not recorded, but a photograph implies that it was probably less than about 2 feet) and unlike the previously described storage pits so it may have had a different function, as yet unknown. Importantly, this feature appeared buried below the lodge floor, suggesting its construction and use before the earthlodge was built.³⁰

Prior use of the Blue Earth site by the Kanzas (or earlier Native peoples) is certainly possible given the suitability of the location for occupation and the long history of activity in this region. Historical maps of the lower Missouri and surrounding areas associate the Kanzas with the Kansas River at least by the early eighteenth

century. However, archaeological and historical evidence place their villages of the late seventeenth and well into the eighteenth centuries near the Missouri River in present-day northwestern Missouri and northeastern Kansas. Their initial link to the Kansas River may have been through annual bison hunts along its western tributaries. Biddle estimates that the Kanzas moved away from the Missouri River around the beginning of the nineteenth century due to threats by the Ioways and Sacs. Other documents indicate the move may have occurred slightly earlier. During the winter of 1790–1791, fur trader Pierre Chouteau reportedly stayed with the Kanzas on the Kansas River. Although the location of this village is not specified, it may have been Blue Earth. Maps made by Pierre Antoine Soulard for the Spanish and Georges-Henri-Victor Collot for the French based on information gathered in the mid-1790s clearly show a Kanza (“Can”) village just below the mouth of the Blue or Blue Water

30. Ibid., 190–91.

River. These and other references indicate a relatively permanent Kanza presence along this river, including at Blue Earth, by the late eighteenth century.³¹ Still, it is unclear whether the Blue Earth site was used continuously as their primary home.

Eight years prior to the Long Expedition, George C. Sibley, United States trader at Osage Factory, stopped at a Kanza village on the north side of the Kansas River during a trip through the region. Although this is often assumed to be Blue Earth, various clues indicate otherwise.³² Sibley left Fort Osage on May 11, 1811, following a circuitous route, first to the southwest to visit an Osage camp before turning northward to the Kansas River. As he traveled, Sibley recorded general compass readings and estimated distances navigated, but the latter were rough approximations based on an inaccurate rate of travel. Problems with these measures make it impossible to locate precisely the village he visited based on these data. However, indicators of its location lie in Sibley's description: it was "seated in a beautiful prairie of moderate extent, which is encircled very nearly by the main [Kansas] river on one side, small creek westerly, the north fork just above and a chain of romantic prairie hills northerly, which last give a very pleasing effect to the whole of this beautiful location."³³ This description might be interpreted to fit several locations along the Kansas River, but Wedel interprets the "north fork" as the Republican (rather than the Big Blue) River. This presents a more western location for the 1811 village.³⁴ Other references to the "north fork" of the Kansas River

in Sibley's journal support that suggestion. In his account of travel from the Pawnee villages along the Loup River to a Kanza hunting camp south of the Smoky Hill (Kansas) River, Sibley's group (guided by Kansas who would have had extensive knowledge of the region) crossed, in sequence, the Platte, a day's travel south of the Loup, the "north fork," then "two other considerable branches of the Konsee [sic] river" before reaching the Kansas or Smoky Hill River. Sibley appears to have been following a well-known Indian trace called the Pawnee Trail.³⁵ His narrative of the route correlates well with this trail, which crossed from north to south, the Republican River, followed by the Solomon and Saline Rivers, before reaching the Smoky Hill (or Kansas) River.³⁶ In brief, the reference to the "north fork" of the Kansas River by Sibley best fits the Republican, not the Blue River.

Sibley's description of the village's location fits well with the valley of the Kansas River just below the mouth of the Republican. Bottomlands "of moderate extent" exist in this area bounded south and east by the Kansas River and "a small creek westerly," today likely Pumphouse Canyon. The lowest reach of the Republican River is immediately above (upstream on the Kansas River from) this creek. This area is bounded on the northwest by the valley bluffs or the "chain of romantic prairie hills northerly." No archaeological evidence of a Kanza village has been confirmed here, but this is not surprising given the perishable and temporary nature of the structures described by Sibley, the difficulty of identifying Kanza objects from this time period, and extensive modification of this area related to the growth of Fort Riley, an active military post established in the mid-nineteenth century.³⁷ These clues suggest that the Kanza village visited by Sibley in 1811 was not Blue Earth, but rather another below the mouth of the Republican.

31. [Biddle], "Notes on the Missouri River, and Some of the Native Tribes in Its Neighbourhood," 306–7; William E. Foley and C. Davis Rice, *The First Chouteaus: River Barons of Early St. Louis* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 49; W. Raymond Wood, "The Missouri River Basin on the 1795 Souland Map: A Cartographic Landmark," *Great Plains Quarterly* 16 (Summer 1996): 183–98; Georges-Henri-Victor Collot, *Journey in North America, Containing a Survey of the countries Watered by the Mississippi, Ohio, Missouri, and other Affluing Rivers*, vol. 1 (Paris: Arthus Bertrand, 1826), online facsimile edition at <http://www.americanjourneys.org/aj-088a/summary/>; Wedel, "The Kansa Indians," 1–35; Unrau, *The Kansa Indians*, 21–24.

32. George R. Brooks, ed., "George C. Sibley's Journal of a Trip to the Salines in 1811," *Missouri Historical Society Bulletin* 21, no. 3 (1965): 174; Unrau, *The Kansa Indians*, 37, 89–92; Donna C. Roper, "The Status of the Blue Earth Kansa Site (14PO24)," *Current Archaeology in Kansas*, no. 8 (2009): 10; Benjamin Y. Dixon, "Furthering Their Own Demise: How Kansa Indian Death Customs Accelerated Their Depopulation," *Ethnohistory* 54, no. 3 (2007): 475–77; Kelly, *Lost Voices on the Missouri*, 181.

33. Brooks, "George C. Sibley's Journal of a Trip to the Salines in 1811," 174.

34. Wedel, "The Kansa Indians," 13; James O. Marshall, "The Kansa," in *Kansas Archaeology*, ed. Robert J. Hoard and William E. Banks (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2006), 123–25.

35. Donald J. Blakeslee, *Along Ancient Trails: The Mallet Expedition of 1739* (Niwot: University Press of Colorado, 1995), 35. *St. Marys* (Kans.) *Times*, May 11, 1877.

36. The Kanzas considered the Smoky Hill part of the Kansas River and called it by the same name (*Dôpik'è gaxá*). The Republican, on the other hand, was considered a tributary of the Kansas and designated as the "Republican Fork" on early historical maps post-dating Sibley's travels.

37. Fiona K. Price, Archaeologist and Collections Manager, Cultural Resources Office, Directorate of Public Works, Fort Riley, Kansas, July 31, 2014. Geomorphic studies of extant historic maps show that only minor changes have occurred to the Kansas River channel and surrounding lands just below the mouth of the Republican River over the past 150 years. Wakefield Dort Jr., *Historical Channel Changes of the Kansas River and Its Major Tributaries* Special Publication no. 42 (New York: The American Geographical Society, 2009), 41, 48.

The village of 1811 shared some similarities with Blue Earth, but also important differences. Both were located on the north side of the Kansas River on broad prairies with gardens nearby (suggesting some permanence). The size of each village was similar, with Sibley reporting 128 lodges, while Say and Biddle counted 120 at Blue Earth.³⁸ Despite these similarities, their houses differed significantly. Unlike the circular earthlodges at Blue Earth, those described by Sibley were temporary skin-, bark-, and mat-covered longhouses:

These are generally about sixty feet long and twenty five feet wide, constructed of stout saplings and poles, arranged in form of a common garden arbour [*sic*] and covered with skins, bark and mats. They are commodious and comfortable. The place for fire and cooking, is simply a hole dug in the earth right under the ridge pole of the roof, where a small opening is left to let out the smoke. All the larger lodges (some of them are 80 or 100 ft. long) have two, three or four fire places, one for each family dwelling in it. Such dwellings are of course incapable of any long duration. The skeletons are left entirely naked when the Indians go off on their great hunts, the covering being needed for their hunting camps, which are built very much like the village as to size & comfort, tho' with much less strength. These lodges (the best of them in the town) are to some extent carpeted with mats and skins, and as already remarked are quite comfortable, and commodious.

Elsewhere in his discussion Sibley refers to the "combustible nature of the materials of which it [the lodge] is built" and if burned could be easily rebuilt or repaired, attesting to their different construction and more temporary nature than earthlodges. Not surprisingly, given the close relationship between the Kansas and Osages, these lodges are comparable to those used by the latter during the early historic period (and with which Sibley was familiar).³⁹ This similarity, combined with the

contrast in house form less than a decade later at Blue Earth, demonstrates the knowledge, skills, and flexibility of the Kansas.⁴⁰

During their four-day stay at Blue Earth, the Americans experienced Kanza village life and gained first-hand knowledge of the people and their ways of living. Observations recorded by Say, Biddle, Peale, and Seymour (the latter two through images), as well as those by Sibley while at the 1811 village, allow us to understand certain aspects of Kanza culture during the first quarter of the nineteenth century. This was an important time for the Kansas as they experienced dramatic changes in the years that followed.

The Kansas had long practiced a pattern of gardening, hunting, and trade. In mid-May 1811, Sibley found that the Kanza women had just finished planting their gardens. He saw "little garden patches . . . in all directions, at convenient distances around the village. The whole together would not be equal to one hundred acres."⁴¹ In these plots Kanza women raised corn, beans, pumpkins, and melons.⁴² Once seeds were planted and started to germinate the entire tribe moved to the western plains to pursue bison. This annual hunt restocked supplies of meat, as well as hides for clothing, bedding, tent covers, bags and trunks, rawhide straps, sinew for sewing, horn and bones for tools, internal organs for containers, and

40. Archaeological evidence from the Fanning site in northeastern Kansas, believed to be an early Kanza village, suggests that the Kansas were building earthlodges as early as the latter portion of the seventeenth century. Bark lodges continued to be used in later times, not only at temporary camps but also in certain villages. Wedel, *An Introduction to Kansas Archeology*, 131–36; Lela Barnes, ed., "Journal of Isaac McCoy for the Exploring Expedition of 1828," *Kansas Historical Quarterly* 5 (August 1936): 254.

41. Brooks, "George C. Sibley's Journal of a Trip to the Salines in 1811," 176.

42. Corn, beans, and pumpkins or squashes were native to North America and had been cultivated for more than a thousand years in the American Midwest and Great Plains. Melons, on the other hand, were introduced by Europeans to the Americas. This probably occurred when the Spanish settled parts of Central and North America in the sixteenth century. Melons were quickly adopted by many Native groups, perhaps because of their easy cultivation; similarity to squashes, with which they were familiar; and the sweet taste of watermelons and other varieties. Watermelon seeds have been recovered from at least two protohistoric sites along the lower Missouri River. One of these, the King Hill site, is believed to have been home for the Kansas during part of the late seventeenth century. Thus watermelons had likely been a common cultigen of the Kansas for at least a century before Blue Earth became their home. Leonard W. Blake, "Early Acceptance of Watermelon by Indians of the United States," *Journal of Ethnobiology* 1 (December 1981): 193–99.

38. Brooks, "George C. Sibley's Journal of a Trip to the Salines in 1811," 174; James, *Account of an Expedition from Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains*, 112; [Biddle], "Notes on the Missouri River, and Some of the Native Tribes in Its Neighbourhood," 305–6.

39. Brooks, "George C. Sibley's Journal of a Trip to the Salines in 1811," 174–75; Willard H. Rollings, *The Osage: An Ethnohistorical Study of Hegemony on the Prairie-Plains* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1992), 18–22.

other miscellaneous items. The summer excursion was also a social affair for the community, an activity that had been followed for many decades. In July 1724, de Bourgmont observed the Kansas (300 men, 300 women, 500 children, 300 dogs, and a number of horses) travel from their village along the Missouri River in present-day northeastern Kansas to the western plains to hunt bison.⁴³ Later in summer, they returned with the fruits of their success. In 1819 they returned in mid-August.⁴⁴ By that time, corn was ripening, signaling the beginning of harvest. What followed was a time of abundance and feasting.

The scientists of the Long Expedition experienced this through the lavish hospitality of their Native hosts. After being welcomed into the village, they shared a pipe with the tribal leaders and discussed their visit. The chief then hosted the first of a succession of feasts. Biddle described these (perhaps exaggerating their number):

[After the first meal] we were invited to a feast by one of the head men; we accompanied him to his lodge and were invited to seat ourselves on a mat; two wooden bowls, filled with Buffaloe [*sic*] meat, soup and corn were placed before us, with spoons made of the Buffaloe [*sic*] horn; we found the dish very palatable, and although we had just risen from eating, we ate heartily again. As soon as we had finished, we arose and left the lodge; we were immediately, however, invited to another feast, and conducted to another lodge; we seated ourselves again on the mat; and corn, prepared in a manner new to us, was again set before us; we thought it good, and took our leave in the same unceremonious manner as before; we were invited again to a feast, that consisted of water melons; during the course of the day, we were invited to partake of nine or ten feasts.

During the remainder of their visit, food was prepared for the scientists by one of the wives of the chief and others in the village and included as many as four to six

meals each day. Even during regular meals the Kansas were “invariably supplying us with the best pieces, or choice parts, before they attempted to taste the food themselves.”⁴⁵

Meals commonly included fresh or dried meat, vegetables, and fruit prepared in a variety of ways. The guests savored the bison meat that accompanied most repasts. It was jerked or dried and sometimes cooked in water with vegetables to make soup. One such potage consisted of fresh sweet corn, bison meat, fat, and beans. Salt from saline flats in present northern Oklahoma also provided seasoning, although the Kansas were said not to favor it.⁴⁶ Melons and corn were eaten fresh, the latter roasted on the ear. If dried corn or pumpkins were available, they were boiled and served with meat. Corn was pounded and bison fat prepared like sausages, easy to transport while traveling. The Kansas also made hominy or “leyed corn” by boiling the dried kernels with wood ashes, allowing the grains to expand and shed their skins, then rinsing before boiling again to further soften the seeds. Biddle especially liked the tasty mush made this way with bison fat.⁴⁷

Whereas the visitors only noted eating bison meat and garden produce while at Blue Earth, the Kansas also hunted and trapped other animals and harvested wild plants. Clues to this variety can be gleaned from archaeological remains from Blue Earth recovered by Wedel in 1937 and Frederick H. Sterns of Harvard University in 1914. Because modern systematic recovery techniques were not used, the inventory of animals hunted and their relative importance may be incomplete. However, the arbitrary sample of bones provides some insights. For example, elk (*wapiti*) and white-tailed and mule deer were important supplements to the Kanza diet. Other fauna included turkey, black bear, raccoon, beaver,

45. [Biddle], “Notes on the Missouri River, and Some of the Native Tribes in Its Neighbourhood,” 305; James, *Account of an Expedition from Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains*, 113–14.

46. One of the main goals of Sibley’s 1811 travels was to see the Rock Saline (“Jefferson’s Salt Mountain”) and Grand Saline of which the Osages and others often spoke. The Great Salt Plains of northern Oklahoma are the largest saline flat in the Kansas–Oklahoma region. Salt from ancient marine sands below the surface of this flat plain is moved to the surface by groundwater and deposited when the water evaporates. Sibley’s description of the salines in the account of his trip provides the first written description of this natural source of salt. Brooks, “George C. Sibley’s Journal of a Trip to the Salines in 1811.”

47. James, *Account of an Expedition from Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains*, 114; [Biddle], “Notes on the Missouri River, and Some of the Native Tribes in Its Neighbourhood,” 305, 311–12.

43. Norall, *Bourgmont*.

44. The bison were said to be relatively near Blue Earth that summer. This may have made it possible for the Kansas to return to the village on short notice when Indian Agent Benjamin O’Fallon requested their presence at a council on Isle au Vache on the Missouri River. James, *Account of an Expedition from Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains*, 111; [Biddle], “Notes on the Missouri River, and Some of the Native Tribes in Its Neighbourhood,” 304.

cougar, pocket gopher, horse, and dog. Horses, and perhaps dogs, were not common food sources especially given their utility for transportation, hunting, trade, gift-giving, and companionship. Historical documents for the first quarter of the nineteenth century do not reference the consumption of dog meat, but this practice was known in later times; cut marks on one canid bone from the Blue Earth site suggest it too may have been butchered for food. The pocket gopher probably died naturally at the site. Many of the other animals provided valuable hides, skins, or pelts and may have been selected primarily for those or other useful body parts (e.g., teeth, claws, bones). Freshwater mussel shells indicate they were also gathered, probably for added variety to the Kanza diet. It is unclear if fish were eaten.⁴⁸

Various wild plants were collected as sources of food, medicine, and herbs for smoking. Prairie or Indian turnips (potatoes), *Psoralea esculenta*, were an important food for the Kanzas as they were for many Plains Indians. The tuber of this low-growing prairie plant was dug, sometimes in large numbers, in early summer and eaten fresh, boiled, or dried and pounded. The significance of this plant in particular to the Kanzas is suggested by their name for the Kansas River, *Dópik'è gaxá*. The Dheghian (Siouan) word *dópik'è* translates as “good place to dig potatoes.” Indeed the prairie turnip was once common in the prairies and plains along the Kansas River.⁴⁹ Other wild plants did not serve solely as sources of food, but as medicines and to modify the tobacco they smoked. The American visitors discovered this when invited upon their arrival to smoke the “calumet.” Biddle observed that

They are excessively fond of smoking the pipe; they do not make use of the tobacco alone, but mix it in the proportion of about half with the leaves of the sumach-tree scorched before the fire, and pulverized; or the inner bark of the red willow, dried and cut into small pieces; the smoke of this mixture has an

agreeable smell, and communicates a more pleasant taste than the tobacco does without it.⁵⁰

Because the 1819 trip to Blue Earth occurred in August and Sibley's 1811 visit in May, the travelers did not experience the activities of the Kanzas during other parts of the year. References in various historical documents indicate that by late fall and into winter, hunting, trapping, and trade were the major activities. Around October, Kanza families left the village again and moved individually or as groups to areas near the Missouri River. Here they found abundant deer, elk, turkeys, and bears as well as fur-bearing animals such as beaver, otter, and raccoons. This also put them closer to traders along the Missouri River.⁵¹ Included among these were Sibley at Osage Factory. This installation about thirty river miles below the mouth of the Kansas River was supported by the federal government nearly continuously between 1808 and 1822.⁵² In October 1808, soon after the factory had opened, Sibley recorded that “the whole of the Kanzas arrived this day (to the number of about 1,000 Souls) their object is to Trade, and to Settle their differences with the Whites.” Trade appears to have been brisk despite the fact that the Kanzas' major winter hunt did not start until late November, continuing into the spring. Despite some misgivings about having Indians close to the factory, Sibley reported in his early years at this post that he hoped to convince the Kanzas to settle nearby. He was unable to entice them to leave their home along the Kansas River (which was farther from their enemies, the Ioways, Sacs, and Otos), but the Kanzas visited and traded there occasionally. Sibley boasted that he offered

50. [Biddle], “Notes on the Missouri River, and Some of the Native Tribes in Its Neighbourhood,” 312. Mixing tobacco with leaves or bark of native trees may have not only altered the flavor but also stretched the Kanzas' supply of tobacco, which was not grown locally, but only available as gifts or through trade with Euroamericans.

51. *Ibid.*, 307.

52. The federal factory (trade) system was organized in 1795, originally administered by the secretary of war, and after 1806 by the superintendent of Indian trade under the secretary of war. Its most overt function was Indian trade, but the primary goal was to build friendly relations between the United States and Indian tribes. As in the case of Osage Factory, military posts were often built nearby for protection. The secretary of war also allowed private trade through the award of trade licenses. The factory system did not make a profit, although George Sibley declared the success of Fort Osage in terms of returns, primarily from the Osages, but also through trade with the Kanzas and others. Osage Factory was closed during the War of 1812; during part of that time, Sibley maintained a post downstream. The post was re-established in 1815. The factory system ended in 1822 in part due to the strong political influence of private traders.

48. Paula Molloy, “Hunting Practices at an Historic Plains Indian Village: Kansa Ethnoarchaeology and Faunal Analysis,” *Plains Anthropologist* 38, no. 143 (1993): 187–97; Wedel, *An Introduction to Kansas Archeology*, 192; Unrau, *The Kansa Indians*, 39.

49. Dorsey, “Dorsey Papers”; Cumberland and Rankin, *Kaánze Íe Wayáje*, 52; Kenneth C. Reid, “*Psoralea esculenta* as a Prairie Resource: An Ethnographic Appraisal,” *Plains Anthropologist* 22, no. 78, Part I (1977): 322–24; Waldo R. Wedel, *Notes on the Prairie Turnip (Psoralea esculenta) Among the Plains Indians* ([Lincoln]: Nebraska State Historical Society, 1978); Kelly Kindscher, *Edible Wild Plants of the Prairie: An Ethnobotanical Guide* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1987), 183–89.

the fairest “prices” for skins and hides at his federally supported trade outlet, but the Kansas had access to other traders with whom they could conduct business, looking for the best selection and returns for their hides and furs.⁵³

Among the others were licensed and unlicensed company and independent traders. Given that the earliest and most extensive trade in North America was by the French, even after the transfer of Louisiana Territory to the United States, many of the traders in the Missouri River region were of French descent. Among these in 1807 were Francis Dorion and Pierre Montardy, who were granted American licenses to trade with the Kansas, and B. and J. Vallett, Lebeeche, Derchette, and Louis Gonville, who were awarded hunting licenses along the Kansas River. Three years before the Long Expedition, Francis Chouteau of the influential St. Louis Chouteau family, obtained permission to trade with the Kansas and Little Osages (who resided southwest of the Kansas). Perhaps soon after the Say expedition to Blue Earth, Francis and his cousin Gabriel (Cerre) Chouteau established the “Four Houses” trading post on the lower Kansas River and employed Gonville in their trade with the Kansas and Osages. This trading house stayed active for about a decade.⁵⁴ Other outlets for Kanza furs and stores of manufactured goods existed, especially along the Missouri River. For example, during the fall, winter, and spring of 1818–1819, John O’Fallon, sutler on Isle au Vache, which the Kansas visited that season, stocked goods for the Indian trade (although it is not clear whether he was licensed for commerce with the Indians).⁵⁵

53. Anonymous, “Invoice of Furs, Peltries &c . . . Osage Factory,” n.d., 2–4, microfilm, M856 roll 2, Records of the St. Louis Superintendency, 1813–1850, Record Group 75, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, National Archives and Records Administration, Kansas City, Mo.; Jeffrey E. Smith, “Introduction: George Sibley and the Opening of the Trans-Mississippi West,” in *Seeking a Newer World: The Fort Osage Journals and Letters of George Sibley, 1808–1811* (St. Charles, Mo.: Lindenwood University Press, 2003), 12–43, 85, 132, 139, 143.

54. Charles E. Hoffhaus, *Chez Les Canses: Three Centuries at Kawsmouth: The French Foundations of Metropolitan Kansas City* (Kansas City, Mo.: Lowell Press, 1984); Abraham Phineas Nasatir, ed., *Before Lewis and Clark: Documents Illustrating the History of the Missouri River, 1785–1804*, vol. 2 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990), 706–8; Louise Barry, *The Beginning of the West: Annals of the Kansas Gateway to the American West, 1540–1854* (Topeka: Kansas State Historical Society, 1972), 59, 78, 87–88; William E. Unrau, *Mixed-Bloods and Tribal Dissolution: Charles Curtis and the Quest for Indian Identity* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1989), 16; Shirley Christian, *Before Lewis and Clark: The Story of the Chouteaus, the French Dynasty That Ruled America’s Frontier* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2004), 343, 349.

55. Nichols, *The Missouri Expedition, 1818–1820: The Journal of Surgeon John Gale, with Related Documents*.

Some traders conducted business with the Kansas while they resided in their camps and village. Pierre Chouteau, for instance, spent the winter of 1790–1791 with them on the Kansas River. Louis Gonville was present at Blue Earth when the American scientists arrived in 1819. He lived there for at least three years, although he hunted in the area a dozen years before. He married two Kanza women in succession, both daughters of White Plume, a man of growing influence. Marriages between non-Native traders and Indian women were common during the fur trade era, serving in part as a means of building alliances with obligations for both sides of the union.⁵⁶

Many changes occurred in Kanza culture and society over the long period of involvement with the fur trade.⁵⁷ Adjustments started as early as the seventeenth century and continued through at least the first half of the eighteenth. Among the most noticeable was the transformation of their material culture. The earliest sites in the region believed to have been occupied by the Kansas date to the late seventeenth century and are located near the Missouri River in present-day northwestern Missouri and northeastern Kansas. Among artifacts at these sites are an abundance of chipped stone tools (e.g., stone arrow points, knives, and hide scrapers) and pottery of Native manufacture in addition to ground or pecked stone and bone tools. Also present are a small number of metal and glass objects demonstrating that the site’s occupants were already receiving goods from European traders or their intermediaries.⁵⁸ Trade increased into the eighteenth century, especially while the French maintained Fort Cavagnial in Kanza territory between 1744 and 1764. It was during this period that Native production of stone tools and pottery diminished as items of European and American manufacture such as metal knives, pots or kettles, arrow points, awls, axes, and hoes became readily available. Woven goods such as blankets and

56. James, *Account of an Expedition from Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains*, 128; Foley and Rice, *The First Chouteaus: River Barons of Early St. Louis*, 49; [Biddle], “Notes on the Missouri River, and Some of the Native Tribes in Its Neighbourhood,” 307; Unrau, *The Kansa Indians*, 33–35; Unrau, *Mixed Bloods and Tribal Dissolution*, 15–16; Barry, *The Beginning of the West*, 59, 258; Nasatir, *Before Lewis and Clark: Documents Illustrating the History of the Missouri River, 1785–1804*, 2:708.

57. For the context of the fur trade with the Kansas, see Unrau, *The Kansa Indians*, 54–79.

58. Wedel, *An Introduction to Kansas Archeology*, 98–171; Wedel, “The Kansa Indians”; Scott F. Anfinson, “Early Historic Material from the King Hill Site (23BN1)” (unpublished paper, Anthropology Department, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, 1975), St. Joseph Museum, <http://users.stlcc.edu/mfuller/kinghillHistoric%20Text.html>.

cloth supplemented bison robes and leather clothing. New objects such as guns and various ornaments were also obtained from traders and government officials. This substitution, modification, and addition of non-Native goods occurred alongside other adjustments in the lives of the Kansas through the eighteenth century. By the start of the nineteenth century many skills associated with making tools of stone, clay, and bone were no longer maintained.

By 1819 objects of American and European manufacture were common alongside certain hand-made objects. Of the latter, Say and Biddle noted mats made of cattail leaves, reeds, or bark; wooden bowls carved from tree knots; and large bison horn spoons. They listened to music produced on flutes and drums, as well as rattles made from deer hooves and stones inside inflated animal intestines. Added to this were metal bells obtained through trade. A specific type of whistle used to signal war or attack was made from certain bird bones. Biddle and others stated that the Kansas continued to use the bow-and-arrow, especially for bison hunting. These were likely made as in earlier times with locally available wood, sinew, and feathers; however, points were commonly made of metal. These were purchased from traders, but also made from metal scraps (e.g., worn brass kettles or iron pots) using files obtained through trade. Among the objects recovered through limited archaeological investigations at Blue Earth are metal knife blades, arrow points, files, trap parts, axes, hoes, tinklers (cone-shaped ornaments), gun parts, musket balls, Jew's harps, brass buttons, a brass buckle, kettle parts, scraps of iron, lead, copper or brass, imported gun flints, glazed ceramic sherds, glass and shell beads, tinselled lace, scraps of woolen cloth, sharpening stones, bone knife handles, stone pipe fragments, and bone piercing implements. No Native ceramics and extremely little chipped stone were found, reflecting the abandonment or decline of pottery making and flintknapping.⁵⁹

In exchange for manufactured goods, the Kansas provided skins and furs in demand on world markets. The pelts of fur-bearing animals were of greatest value. The Kansas provided beaver, otter, raccoon, and other furs, but their greatest contribution was deer hides. They and others such as the Osages supplied so many deer skins that by spring 1810 the market was saturated.⁶⁰ Despite this situation, Osage Factory and other traders continued to purchase deer skins and furs from the Kansas through the first quarter of the nineteenth century.

In addition to obtaining hides for trade, the Kansas procured them for their own use, although trade cloth was commonly used for clothing. Bison hides, not yet in high demand by Americans and too bulky and heavy for easy transport, were used for bedding, tent covers, and some clothing, especially untailored "robes." Visitors to Blue Earth saw men dressed simply with a breechclout of blue or red cloth and moccasins made from deer, elk, or bison skin. They sometimes wore deerskin leggings and a bison robe or trade blanket over their shoulder. On special occasions, the robe might be painted or decorated with dyed porcupine quills. Men might also paint parts of their body. They wore ornaments such as necklaces, gorgets, or pendants and frequently shell, bead, silver or other metal earbobs suspended from cuts along the edges of the ears.⁶¹

Fashionable men exhibited tattoos and, importantly, plucked hair from their face and head using a spiral wire, which was carried as ornamentation on their clothing. They allowed only one patch of hair to remain on the back of their head, sometimes supplementing it with a deer-tail roach in a manner well-described by Say:

The hair of most of their chiefs and warriors is scrupulously removed from the head; being careful, however, to leave enough, as in honour they are bound to do, to supply their enemy with a scalp, in case they should be vanquished. This residuum consists of a portion on the back of the head, of about the breadth of the hand, rounded at its upper termination near the top of the head, the

59. James, *Account of an Expedition from Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains*, 113–14; [Biddle], "Notes on the Missouri River, and Some of the Native Tribes in Its Neighbourhood," 305–6; Barnes, "Journal of Isaac McCoy for the Exploring Expedition of 1828," 255; Wedel, *An Introduction to Kansas Archeology*, 193–97; John J. Tomasic, Donna C. Roper, and Lauren W. Ritterbush, "Metal Detector Survey and Test Excavations at the Blue Earth Village Site (14PO24)," *Current Archaeology in Kansas* 9 (2012): 27–29.

60. Anonymous, "Invoice of Furs, Peltries &c . . . Osage Factory"; John Mason, "Letters Sent by the Superintendent of Indian Trade, 1807–1823," 1811, 177–78, 309–10, M16 roll 2, National Archives and Records Administration, Kansas City, Mo.

61. James, *Account of an Expedition from Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains*, 118; [Biddle] "Notes on the Missouri River, and Some of the Native Tribes in Its Neighbourhood," 310; Peale, "Sketchbook from the Stephen H. Long Expedition to the Rocky Mountains," 13; Unrau, *The Kansa Indians*, 28.



These study sketches made by Titian Ramsay Peale while at Blue Earth village in August 1819 illustrate some of the hairstyles, ornamentation, and dress of Kanza men and women. Courtesy of the Yale University Art Gallery.

sides rectilinear, and nearly parallel, though slightly approaching each other towards the origin of the neck, where it abruptly terminates; on the exterior margin, the hair is somewhat longer and erect; this strip of hair is variously decorated; it is sometimes coloured on the margin with vermillion, sometimes a tail feather of the war eagle is attached transversely with respect to the head; this feature is white at base, and black at tip; but the principal ornament, which appears to be worn by some of their chief warriors, and which is, at the same time, by far the most handsome, is the tail of the common deer; this is attached by the base near to the top of the patch of hair, the back of it resting on the hair, and the tip secured near the termination of the patch; the bristly hair of the tail is dyed red by a beautiful permanent colour, and parted longitudinally in the middle by a broad silver plate, which is attached at top, and suffered to hang loose.⁶²

Kanza women appeared less vain about their hair and general appearance. They typically wore their hair long, divided in the middle, with the part colored red. Most of their clothing was made of blue or red trade cloth. Over her upper body a woman wore a waist-length shawl that she could easily remove in hot weather. She draped it over the left shoulder, fastening one corner to another under the right arm. Around her middle she wrapped a piece of cloth to form a skirt below which she might wear a pair of knee-high leggings, sometimes with excess cloth forming an exterior or outer flap or border. Leather moccasins and sometimes a blanket completed her dress.⁶³

Say and his party saw many Kanzas at Blue Earth, but did not spend much time with the village leaders. A "chief" and other influential men welcomed the visitors upon their arrival and provided them with food and lodging before leaving to council with Indian Agent O'Fallon on the Missouri

62. James, *Account of an Expedition from Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains*, 118–19, 121; Peale, "Sketchbook from the Stephen H. Long Expedition to the Rocky Mountains," 13.

63. James, *Account of an Expedition from Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains*, 119–20; [Biddle], "Notes on the Missouri River, and Some of the Native Tribes in Its Neighbourhood," 310; Peale, "Sketchbook from

River. Notwithstanding their absence, Say learned about their role in the tribe. The principal “chief” (a term likely introduced by early European traders) often inherited his position, but was also expected to prove himself as generous and heroic. He and a dozen or more influential men (“minor chiefs” or “chieftains”) formed an informal council that debated important issues pertaining to the tribe. These men held diverse views (including who among them deserved the highest rank or exerted the greatest influence over their people or foreigners) and disagreed on various issues.⁶⁴ Despite their differences, the chief and leading men managed to unify the Kansas through the first quarter of the nineteenth century to the extent that they maintained a tribal identity and lived together in a single village.

Several of the primary Kanza leaders of the early nineteenth century can be identified through passing references in historical documents and as signatories of early treaties. Sibley recognized *Sho"ge-na"ge* as one of the most influential Kansas of the 1810s and early 1820s. He extended hospitality to Sibley in 1811, signed the general peace treaty with the United States at St. Louis in 1815, and was listed as the primary chief during treaty negotiations involving Sibley in fall 1818 and August 1825. Exemplifying the hereditary nature of leadership, *Sho"ge-na"ge*'s eldest son, *Gahíge Wadáyí"ga*, also known as Little or Fool Chief (I), likewise was a respected leader. He too signed the treaties of 1815, 1818, and August 1825. In 1819 Say referred to Fool Chief as the principal leader at Blue Earth village, his father passing on this role to his son. However, while at the council with Indian Agent Benjamin O'Fallon at Isle au Vache that same month, Fool Chief was reported second in rank to another individual called *Na-he-da-ba* or Long Neck. Many others joined the principal chiefs in signing treaties on behalf of the Kansas in 1815, 1818, and 1825, demonstrating their standing within the tribe or among American officials. Increasingly, recognition was gained through charismatic leadership and relationships with representatives of the federal government. This is exemplified by White Plume, a Kanza who was among the signatories of these treaties

and noted as early as 1819 as “a man rising rapidly in importance.” Indeed, White Plume established close ties to Americans who arrived in increasingly large numbers over the next couple decades, eventually becoming recognized by government officials and other Americans as the primary chief of the Kansas.⁶⁵

The changing path to leadership was simply one of many adjustments the Kansas made in the nineteenth century. More dramatic changes began in June 1825 with a treaty negotiated between the Kansas and the federal government in St. Louis. By signing this treaty, White Plume, Fool Chief, and other Kansas ceded land in western Missouri and eastern Kansas. They were allowed a narrow reservation, which extended west from the middle reach of the Kansas River, and promised annuity payments for twenty years. Certain individuals, namely twenty-three offspring of Kanza women and non-Native men, were each awarded a one-mile-square section of land along the north side of the river at the eastern end of the reservation. The treaty was designed not only to confine the Kansas to a reservation and gain lands for Euroamerican settlement, but also to change their economy and lifeways. It made provisions for formal education and encouraging the Kansas to become sedentary farmers. Other obligations included payment of Kanza debts to Francis Chouteau, their primary trader at the time, and compensation for attacks and stealing by Kansas in previous years, reducing the settlement awarded to the tribe.⁶⁶

One of the most immediate impacts of these negotiations was unresolved differences between leaders who held conflicting views about the treaty and related

the Stephen H. Long Expedition to the Rocky Mountains,” 13; Barnes, “Journal of Isaac McCoy for the Exploring Expedition of 1828,” 255.

64. James, *Account of an Expedition from Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains*, 103–5, 111, 114–15; Barry, *The Beginning of the West*, 85; Nichols, *The Missouri Expedition, 1818–1820*, 61–62; [Biddle], “Notes on the Missouri River, and Some of the Native Tribes in Its Neighbourhood,” 303–5; Brooks, “George C. Sibley’s Journal of a Trip to the Salines in 1811,” 176–77; Unrau, *The Kansa Indians*, 49–50.

65. The treaty of 1815 signed in St. Louis was a general peace treaty between the Kansas and the United States. In 1818 Sibley negotiated a provisional treaty at Fort Osage that would have ceded Kanza lands in eastern Kansas to the federal government. It was never ratified. Two treaties were signed early and late in the summer of 1825. The latter, signed at Sora Kanza Creek in central Kansas, negotiated a right-of-way for the increasingly busy Santa Fe Trail across Kanza lands. The earlier treaty of June 1825, which was signed in St. Louis, resulted in the cession of Kanza lands, establishment of a Kanza reservation, and other provisions that would have a long-term impact on the tribe. Brooks, “George C. Sibley’s Journal of a Trip to the Salines in 1811,” 173; Barry, *The Beginning of the West*, 79; Charles J. Kappler, ed., *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, vol. 2, *Treaties, 1778–1883* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1904): 123–24, 222–25, 248–50, <http://digital.library.okstate.edu/kappler/index.htm>; James, *Account of an Expedition from Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains*, 103–5; Unrau, *The Kansa Indians*; Unrau, *Mixed-Bloods and Tribal Dissolution*.

66. Kappler, *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, vol. 2, <http://digital.library.okstate.edu/kappler/vol2/treaties/kan0222.htm#mn7>; Unrau, *The Kansa Indians*, 106–11.

concerns. As a result, the tribe fissioned for the first time within recorded history. By the end of 1825, the council of influential men no longer attained mutual agreement on issues pertaining to the tribe. Instead, individuals and families chose to follow different leaders. As fissures within the tribe failed to heal, groups of families led by influential men left Blue Earth to establish new communities. In September 1828, Isaac McCoy visited or traveled near four Kanza villages. He provided little information about these communities, but three were “small” (one composed of fifteen bark lodges) and on the south side of the Kansas River upstream from Blue Earth. The fourth, described as the “principal” village, may have been Blue Earth, indicating that despite the split within the tribe, some Kanzas may have remained at Blue Earth three years after signing the treaty of June 1825.⁶⁷ Within two years, new settlements were established downstream in the area around modern Topeka. Fool Chief (I), Hard Chief, and American Chief served as leaders of three new communities. White Plume chose to live near his children and grandchildren, who received allotments at the eastern end of the reservation. By 1831 Blue Earth, the thriving earthlodge village visited in 1819 by Say, Jessup, Peale, Seymour, Biddle, and their traveling companions, had been abandoned. Its once sturdy lodges were left to decay and collapse, eventually fading into the landscape leaving few clues to the once active community and many men, women, and children who had called it home.

Understanding Kanza culture and history during the first quarter of the nineteenth century when Blue Earth

village served as a primary home for the Kanzas is vital to appreciating the dramatic changes that occurred in the decades to follow.⁶⁸ This comprehension would not be possible without the integration of ethnohistoric and archaeological analyses. Other than the very useful written observations by Biddle and Say and the extant images created by Peale and Seymour during their 1819 visit to Blue Earth, written and visual documents from this period are limited, generally providing only passing reference to the Kanzas and often based on secondhand information. Extracting meaning from these records is only possible through careful analysis of each in the context of the broader history and culture of the times and relative to one another, using critical thinking to evaluate possible biases and limitations. This is enhanced with the addition of archaeological data as another set of primary information about the Kanzas. Unfortunately, those data are as limited as the written documents. This is largely due to the very extensive damage to the Blue Earth and other archaeological sites caused by natural processes (namely erosion) and our more recent human actions, especially development unguided by archaeological considerations and evaluations. This article serves as an example of what can be learned through the integration of ethnohistoric research with archaeological investigations. These studies, in turn, are only possible with the preservation and documentation of archaeological remains and their contexts, as well as curation of written, visual, and related historical documents. [KH]

67. Barnes, “Journal of Isaac McCoy for the Exploring Expedition of 1828,” 254–56; Roscoe Wilmet, “Kansa Village Locations in the Light of McCoy’s 1828 Journal,” *Kansas Historical Quarterly* 26 (Summer 1960): 152–57.

68. Unrau, *The Kansa Indians*; Parks, *The Darkest Period*.